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USA TODAY'S BRIEFING ON WASHINGTON

Bush orders aide to report on deals

UPI
WHITTLESEY: Did North call her?

Vice President George Bush ordered his national security aide, Donald Gregg, to report today on his dealings with Felix Rodriguez, ex-CIA operative involved in supplying contras. "Gregg apparently had taken it upon himself," said Bush spokesman Martin Fitzwater, "to put Felix in touch with various people . . . The vice president feels that he should have been told."

■ The CIA's Duane "Dewey" Claridge, tapped by CIA Director William Casey to help then-NSC staffer Lt. Col. Oliver North send arms to Iran, is the same man who helped North plan the controversial 1984 mining of Nicaraguan harbors. The Washington Post reports today. Claridge is the CIA's counterterrorism chief.

■ The Justice Department is probing reports that North, who reportedly controlled secret Swiss bank accounts, repeatedly phoned Faith Ryan Whittlesey, U.S. ambassador to Switzerland, in September. She denies knowing of the secret accounts used to funnel money to the contras.

■ New national security adviser Frank Carlucci plans to replace more than half his top staff, and may appoint an inspector general to keep tabs on NSC staffers involved in covert operations, *Newsweek* reports today.

■ Los Angeles County Coroner's Office said Steven Carr, 27, sought as a witness in the Iran-contra arms probe, died Saturday of a possible drug overdose. He was identified as having a key role in the network supplying the contras.

■ 78 percent of USA citizens believe the White House is covering up some details of the Iran-contra deal; 60 percent think the scandal could be as serious as Watergate, found a poll published in today's *Los Angeles Times*. But only one in 10 thought Reagan would resign as a result of the scandal.

MORE MISSILES: The United States plans to further exceed SALT II arms limits next month by deploying another nuclear-tipped cruise missile on a B-52 bomber, said Defense Department spokesman Robert Simms. The U.S. stance: Soviets repeatedly violated the unratified pact; voluntary U.S. compliance no longer is in the national interest.

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